

RECLAMATION

Managing Water in the West

Flaming Gorge Working Group Meeting

Hydrology and Forecasted Operations

June 23, 2016



U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Reclamation

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Upper Colorado Region

Presentation Outline

- Authorities
- Record of Decision – Process
- Record of Decision – Parameters
- Forecasted and Observed 2016 Operations
- Questions / Discussion

Presentation Outline

- **Authorities**
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Authorities

- Colorado River Compact of 1922
- Upper Colorado River Basin Compact of 1948
 - Allocated water among the Upper Basin states
- Colorado River Storage Project Act of 1956 (CRSP Act)
 - Enacted to facilitate development of the water and power resources of the Upper Basin
- 1992 Biological Opinion
- 2006 Record of Decision on FG Operations

Presentation Outline

- Authorities and Purposes
- **Record of Decision – Process**
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Flaming Gorge Decision Process

Operations under the Record of Decision (2006 ROD)

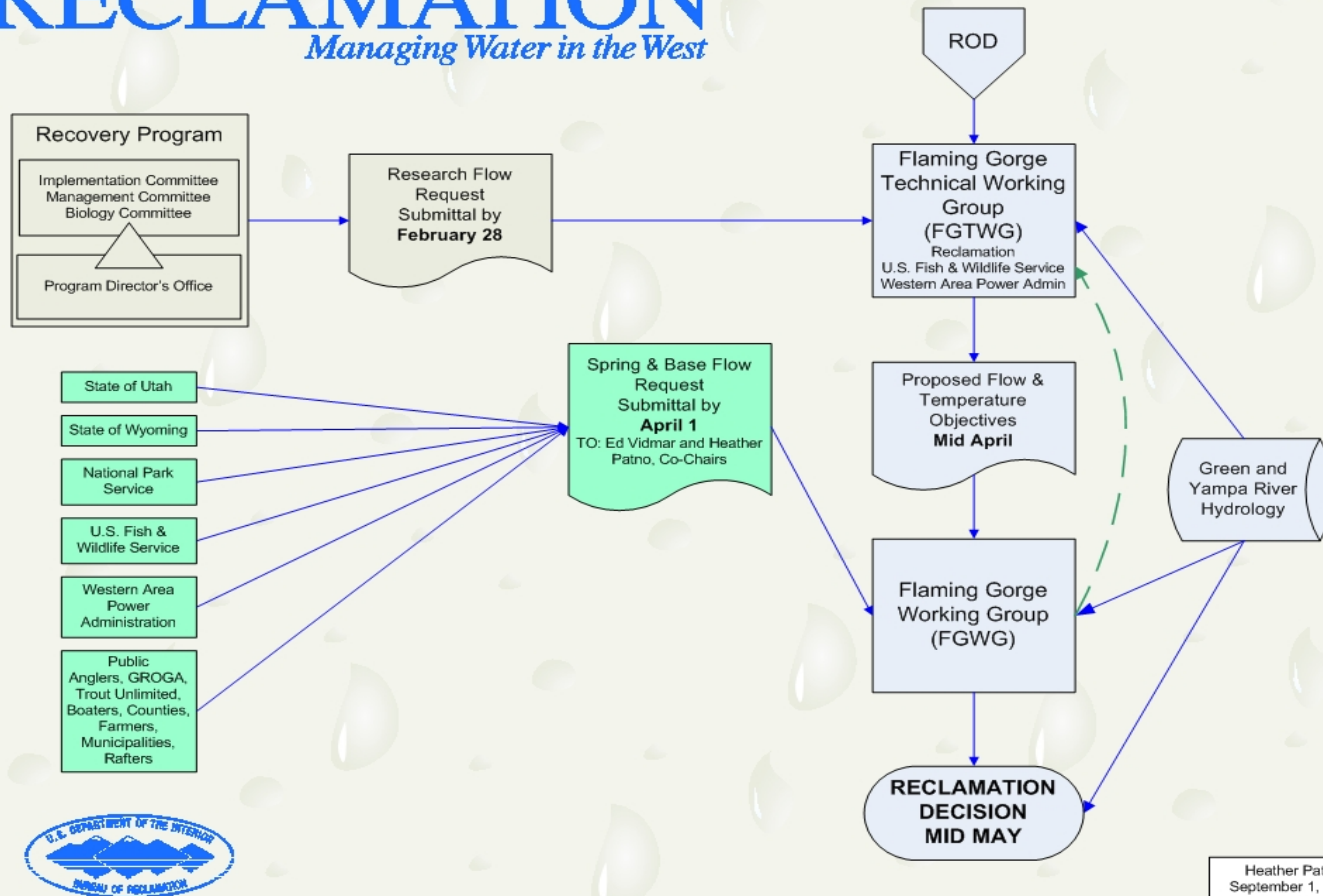
Four Step Process for Decision Making

1. Recovery Program Request for Research Flows
<http://www.coloradoriverrecovery.org/>
ESA Section 7 Compliance and allows the States of Colorado, Utah, and Wyoming to continue utilizing their authorized apportionment under the 1922 Compact
2. Flaming Gorge Technical Working Group
Informal Section 7 Compliance
3. Flaming Gorge Working Group
Public Input and Comments
4. Reclamation makes the final decision of how to operate.

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Flaming Gorge Process

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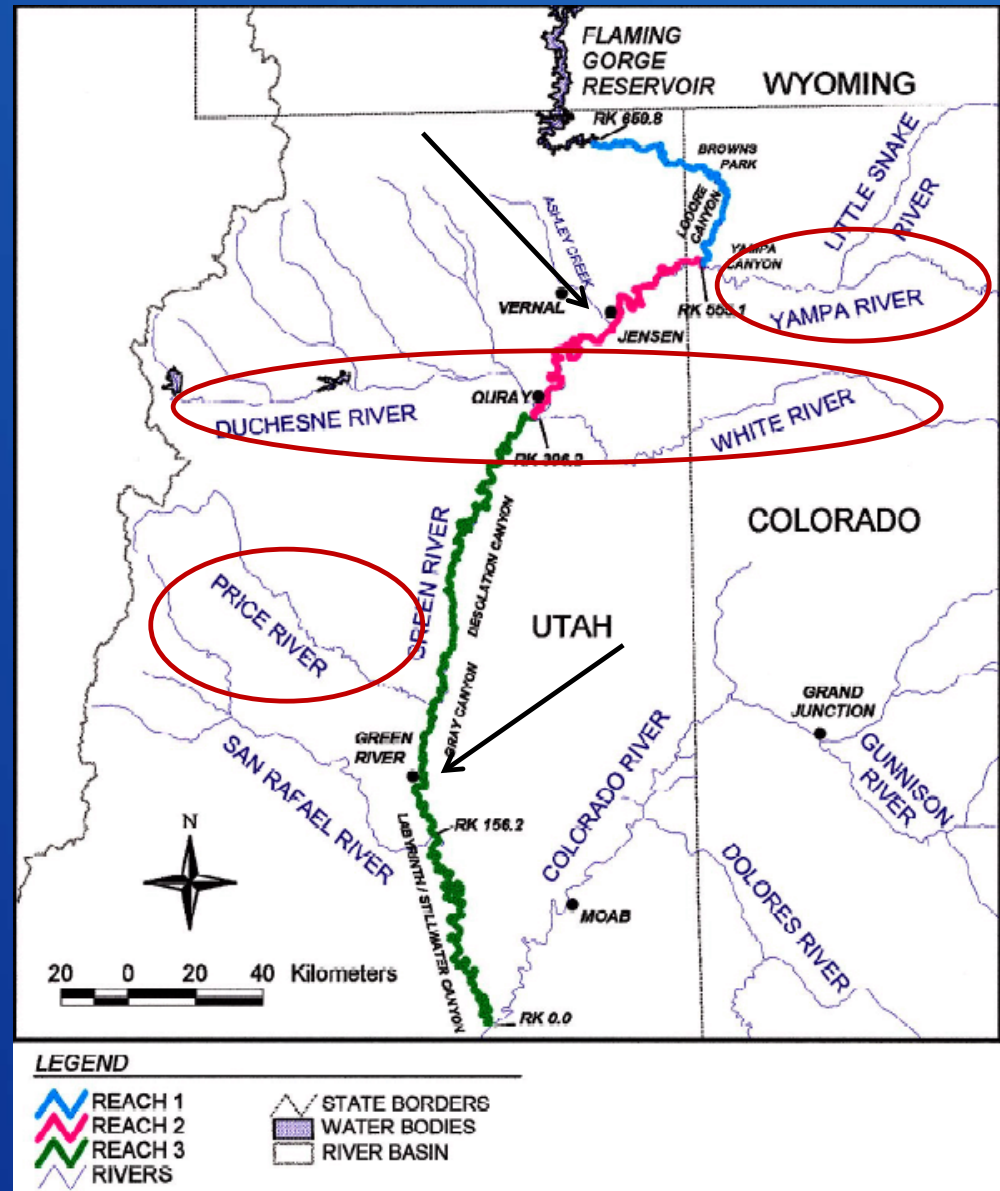
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Geographic Scope

- Reach 1 (Blue)
 - Flaming Gorge Dam to Yampa River Confluence
- Reach 2 (Pink)
 - Yampa River Confluence to White River confluence
- Reach 3 (Green)
 - White River confluence to confluence of Green and Colorado Rivers



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Percentage Exceedances and Hydrologic Classifications

Hydrologic Classification

Percentage Exceedance Range

Wet

<10

Moderately Wet

30 to 10.1

Average

70 to 30.1

Moderately Dry

90 to 70.1

Dry

>90

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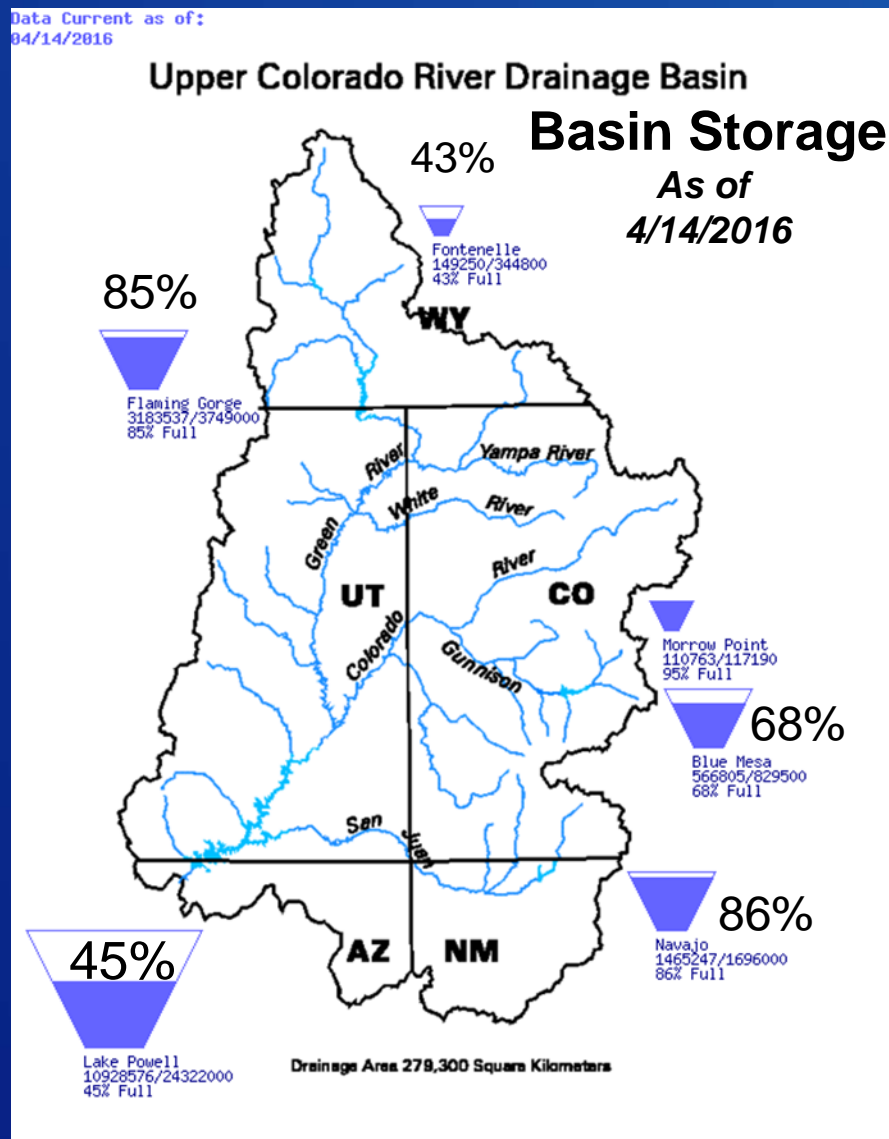
Condensed Table 5.5.—Flow and temperature recommendations by hydrologic condition for Reach 2 (Yampa River to White River) to benefit endangered fishes in the Green River downstream of Flaming Gorge Dam.^a

	Hydrologic Condition ^b				
	Wet (0 to 10% Exceedance)	Moderately Wet (10 to 30% Exceedance)	Average (30 to 70% Exceedance)	Moderately Dry (70 to 90% Exceedance)	Dry (90 to 100% Exceedance)
<i>SPRING PEAK FLOW</i>					
<i>Magnitude</i>	≥ 26,400 cfs	≥ 20,300 cfs	≥ 18,600 cfs in 1 of 2 avr yrs; ≥ 8,300 cfs in other avr yrs	≥ 8,300 cfs	
<i>Duration</i>	>22,700 cfs 2 weeks +, and >18,600 cfs >4 weeks	>18,600 cfs for 2 weeks or more	>18,600 cfs at least 2 weeks in 1 of 4 avr yrs.	at least 1 week.	2 days or more except in dry years (≥ 98% exceedance)
<i>Timing</i>	Peak flows should coincide with peak flows in the Yampa River				
	Hydrologic Condition ^b				
	Wet (0 to 10% Exceedance)	Moderately Wet (10 to 30% Exceedance)	Average (30 to 70% Exceedance)	Moderately Dry (70 to 90% Exceedance)	Dry (90 to 100% Exceedance)
<i>SUMMER THROUGH WINTER BASE FLOW</i>					
<i>Mean flow</i>	2,800 - 3,000 cfs	2,400 - 2,800 cfs	1,500 - 2,400 cfs	1,100 - 1,500 cfs	900 - 1,100 cfs
<i>Approximate period</i>	Aug 15 to Mar 1	Aug 15 to Mar 1	Aug 15 to Mar 1	Aug 15 to Mar 1	Aug 15 to Mar 1

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Upper Basin Storage



April to July 2016 Forecasted Inflow

Issued April 18, 2016

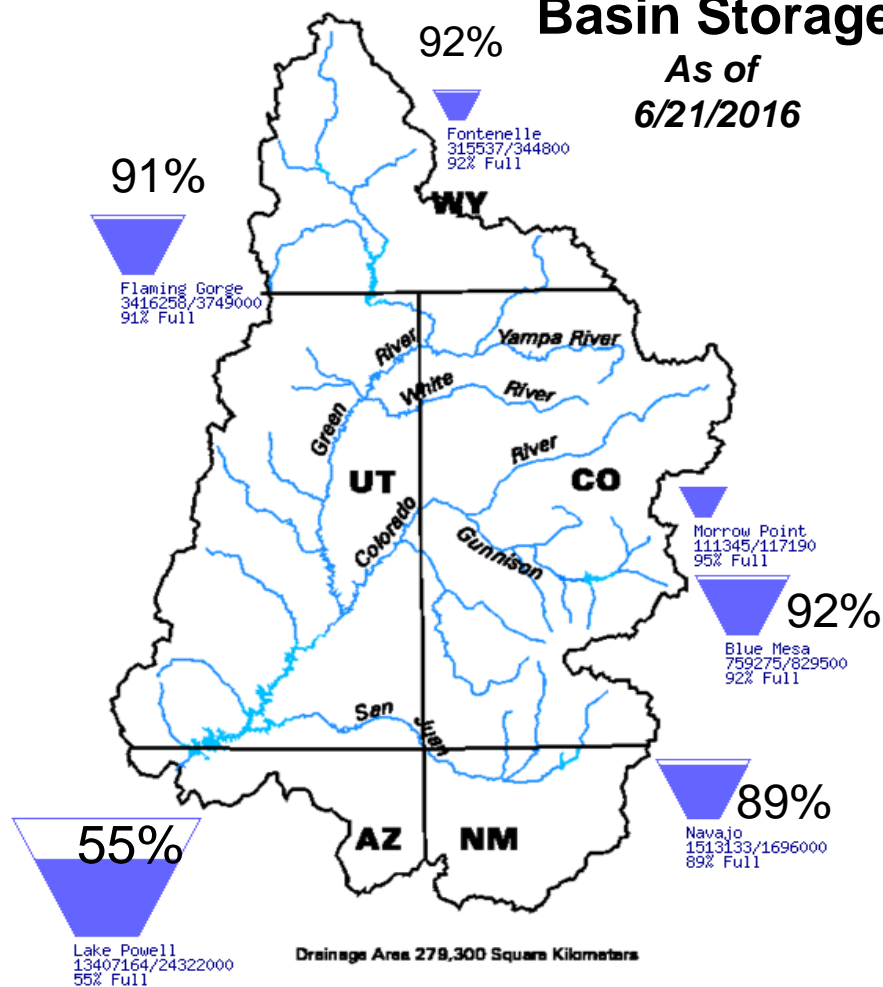
Reservoir	A-J Forecast (KAF)	Percent of Average ¹
Fontenelle	565	78%
Flaming Gorge	740	76%
Blue Mesa	515	76%
Navajo	515	70%
Powell	5,300	74%

¹ percent of average based on period 1981-2010.

Upper Basin Storage

Data Current as of:
06/21/2016

Upper Colorado River Drainage Basin Basin Storage As of 6/21/2016



April to July 2016 Forecasted Inflow Issued June 16, 2016

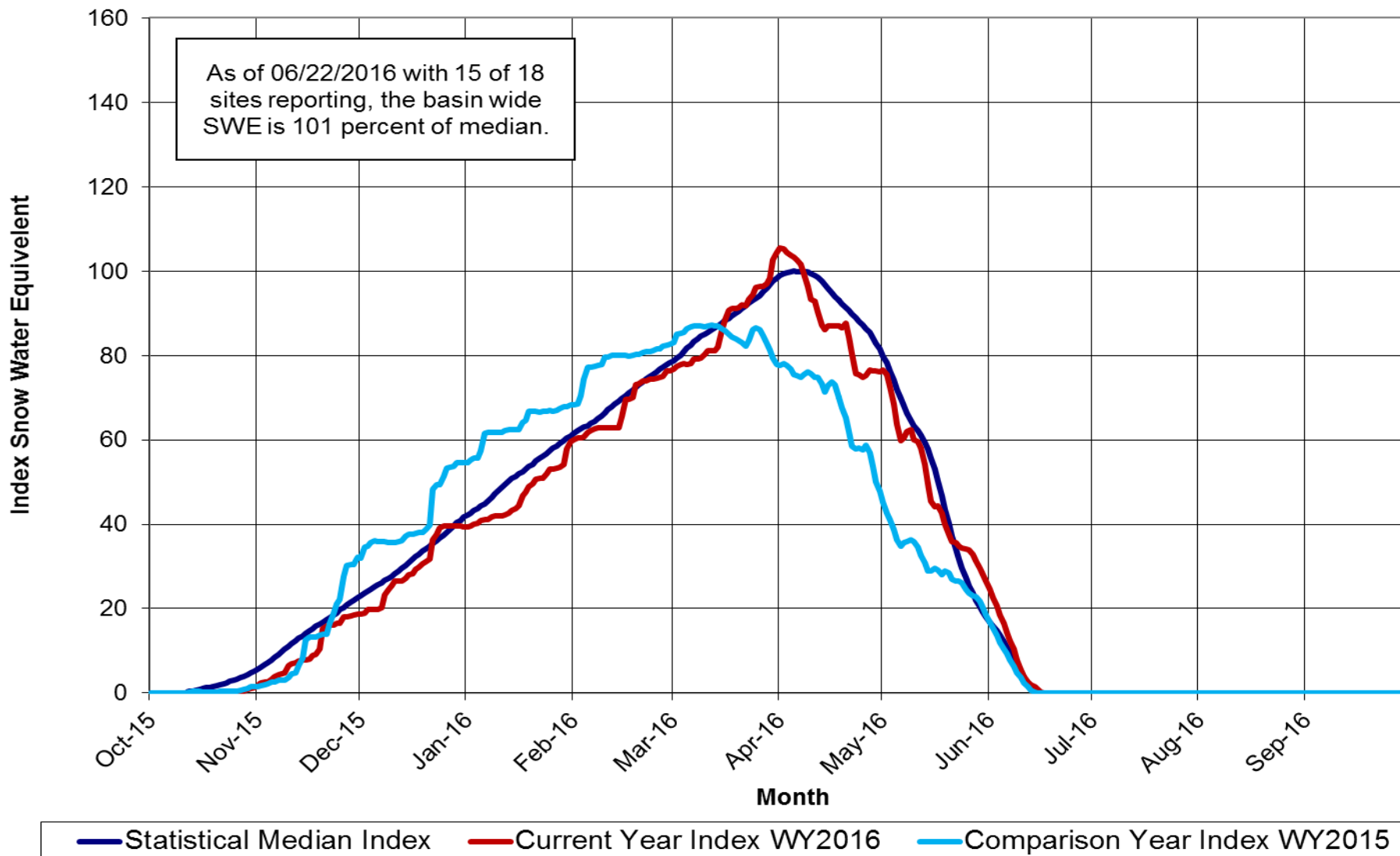
Reservoir	A-J Forecast (KAF)	Percent of Average ¹
Fontenelle	710	98%
Flaming Gorge	1,170	119%
Blue Mesa	600	89%
Navajo	545	74%
Powell	6,600	92%

¹ percent of average based on period 1981-2010.

Upper Green River Basin Snotel Tracking

Aggregate of 18 Snotel Sites above Flaming Gorge Reservoir

As of 06/22/2016 with 15 of 18 sites reporting, the basin wide SWE is 101 percent of median.



Data Provided by the Natural Resource Conservation Service

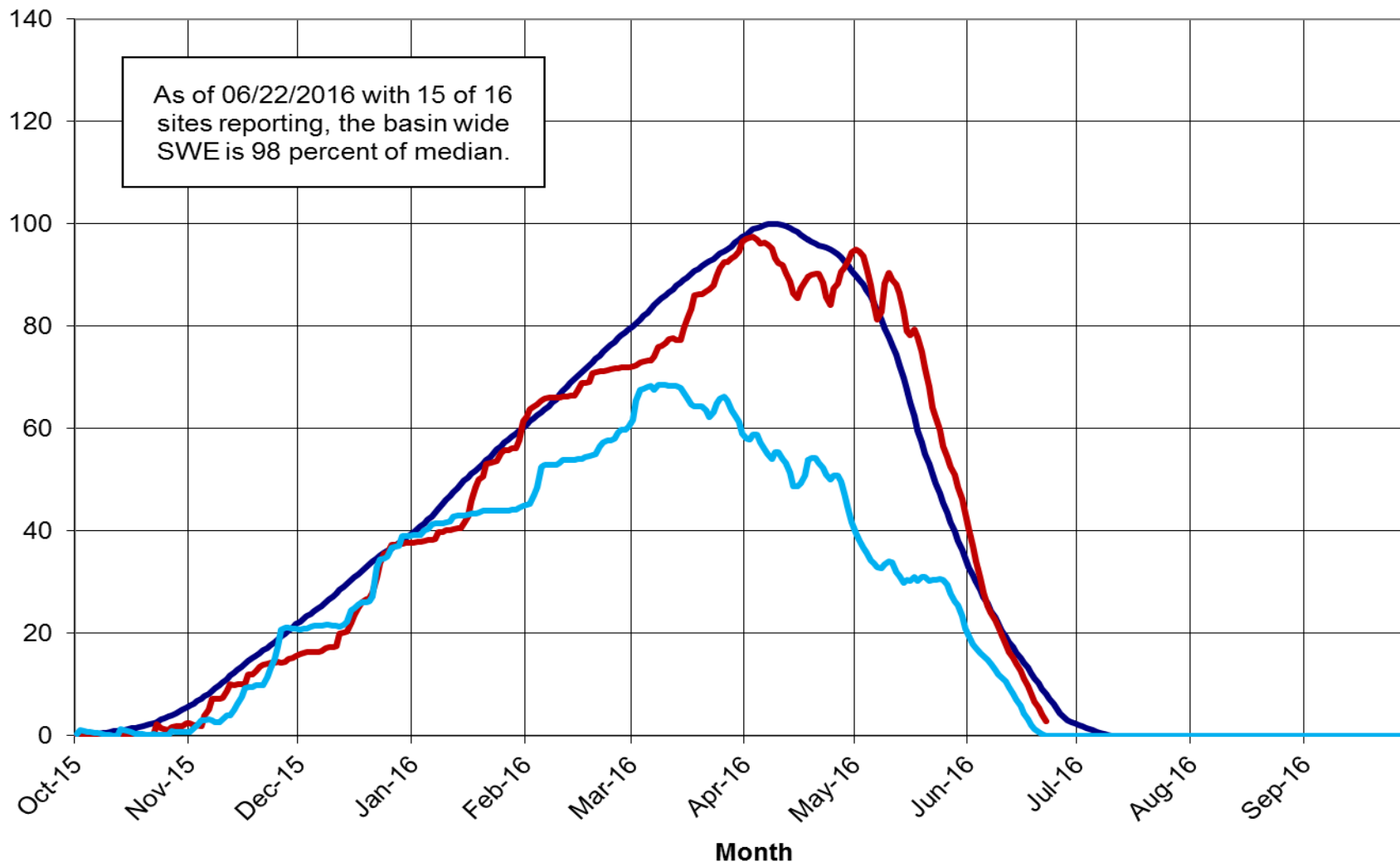
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Upper Yampa River Basin Snotel Tracking

Aggregate of 16 Snotel Sites above Green River Confluence

As of 06/22/2016 with 15 of 16 sites reporting, the basin wide SWE is 98 percent of median.

Index Snow Water Equivalent



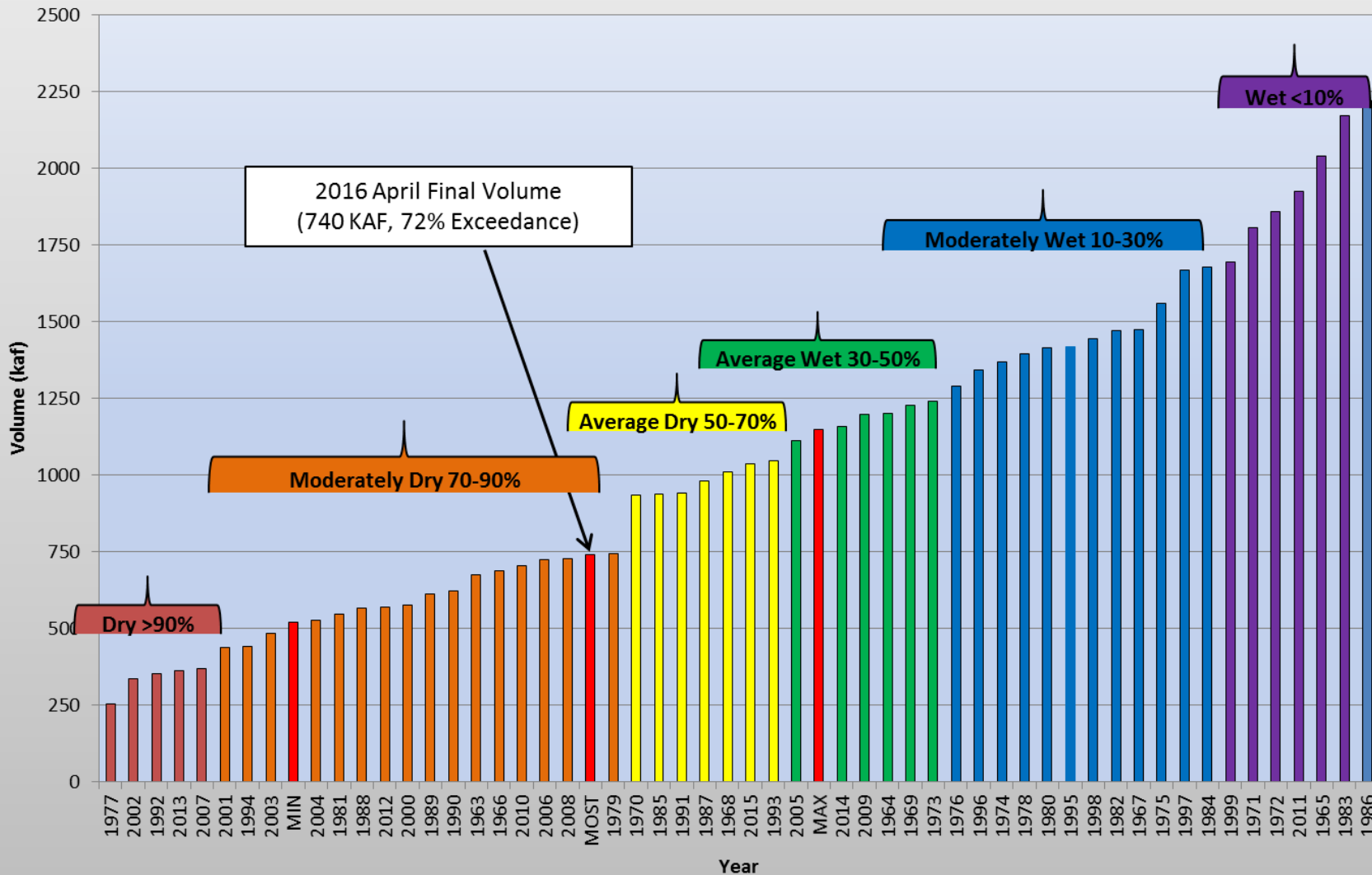
— Statistical Median Index — Current Year Index WY2016 — Comparison Year Index WY2015

Data Provided by the Natural Resource Conservation Service

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Flaming Gorge Reservoir

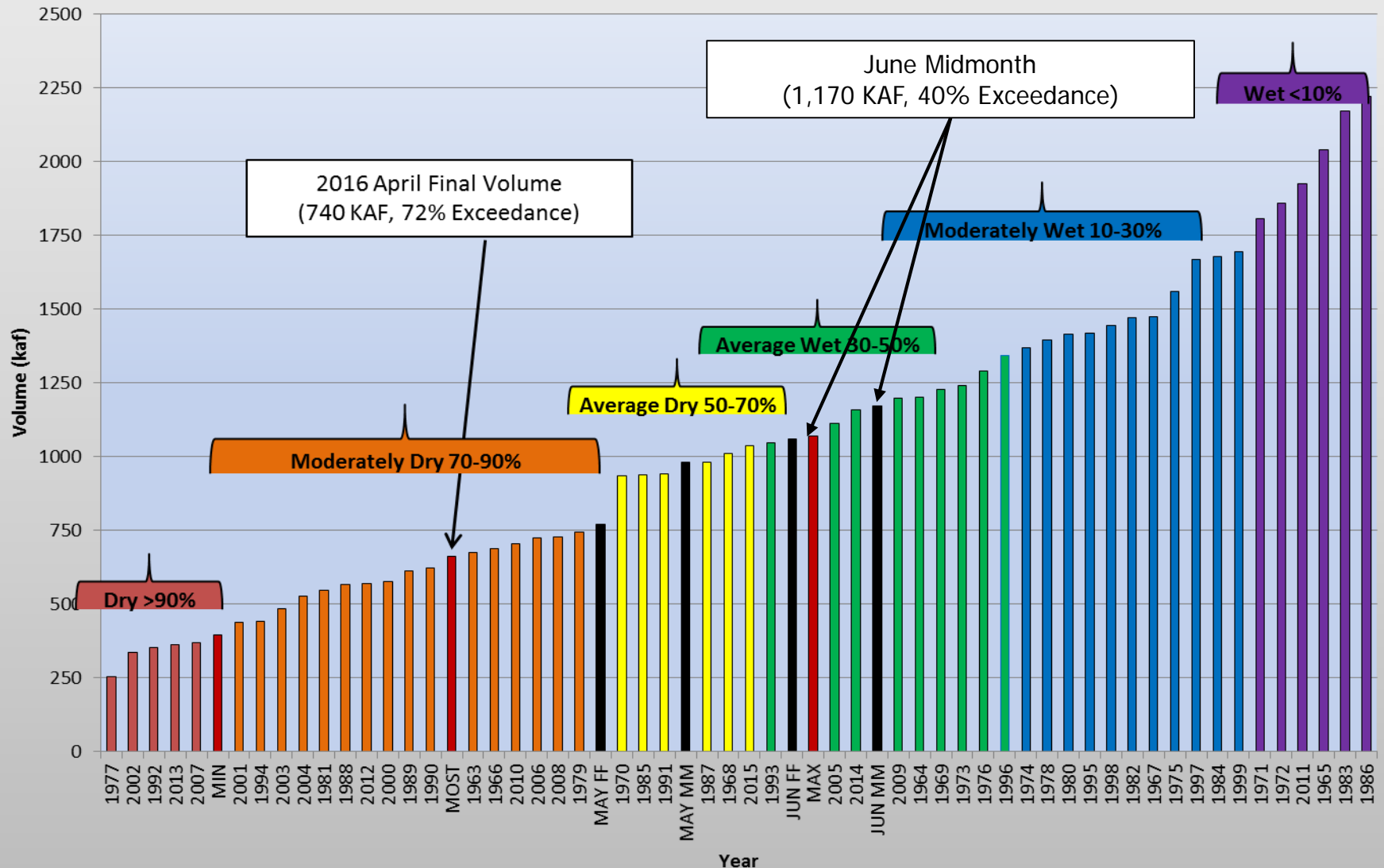
Historic April-July Unregulated Inflow Volume Ranking (1963-2015)



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Flaming Gorge Reservoir

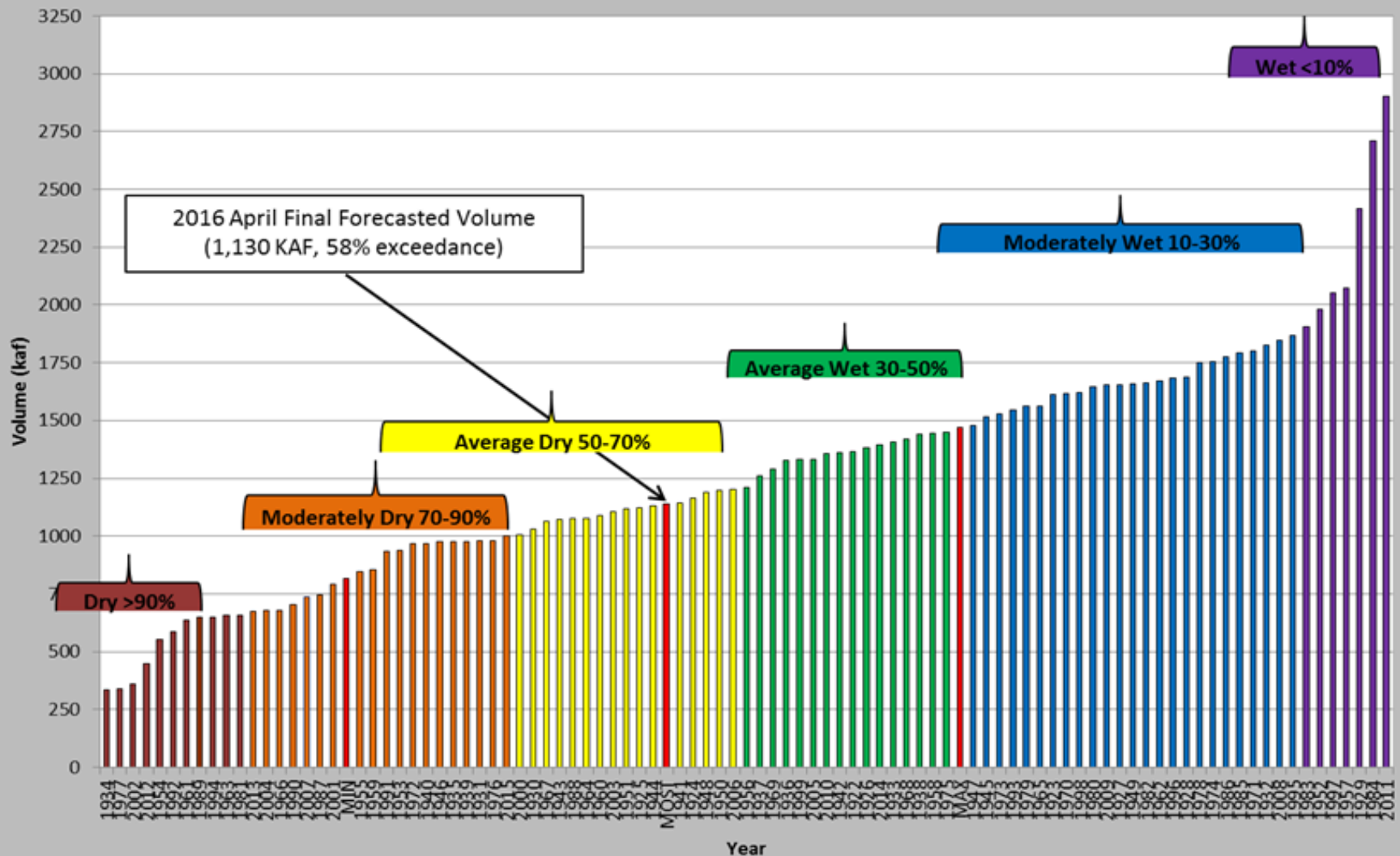
Historic April-July Unregulated Inflow Volume Ranking (1963-2015)



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Yampa River Basin - Maybell Plus Lily

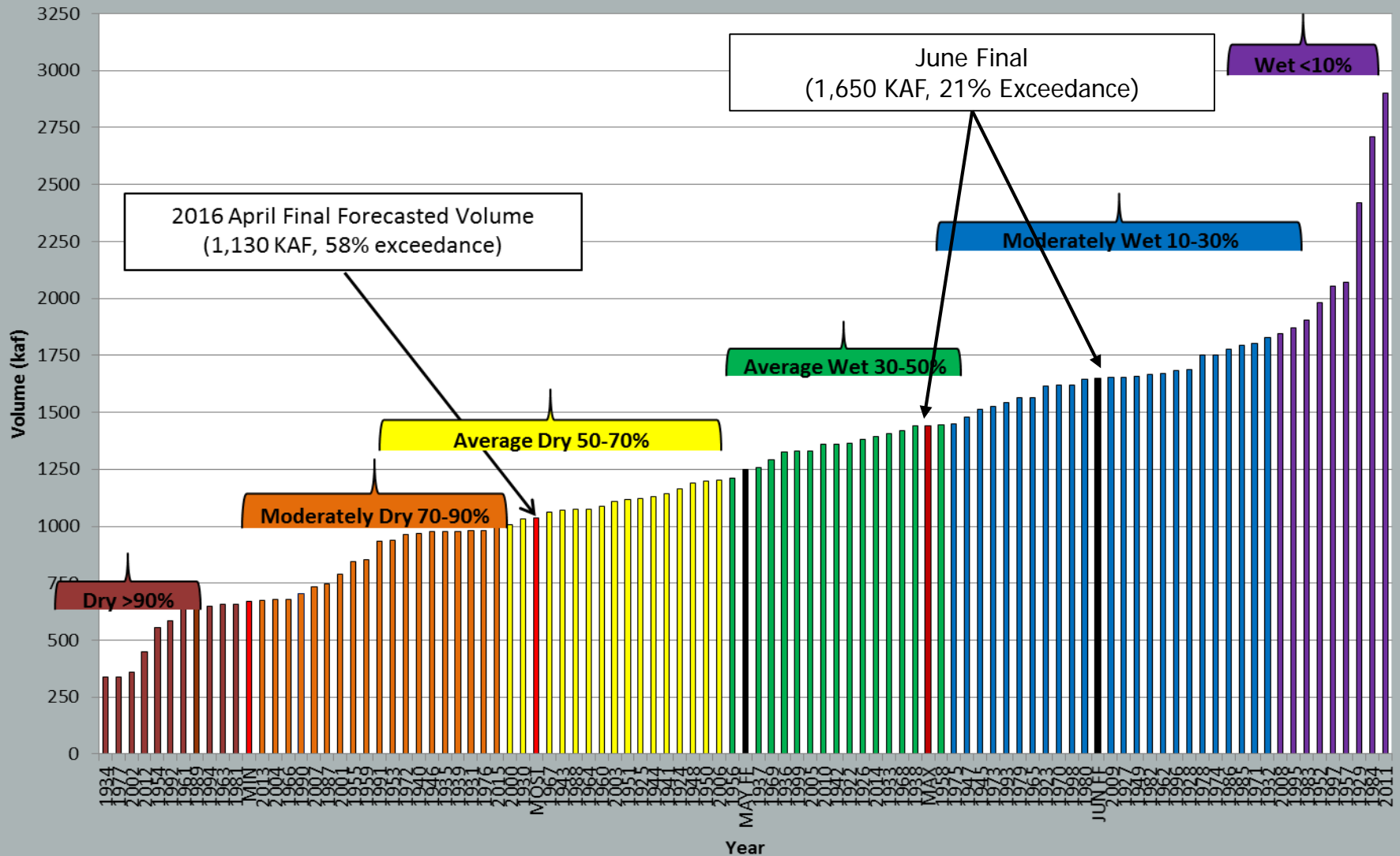
Historic April-July Unregulated Inflow Volume Ranking (1922-2015)



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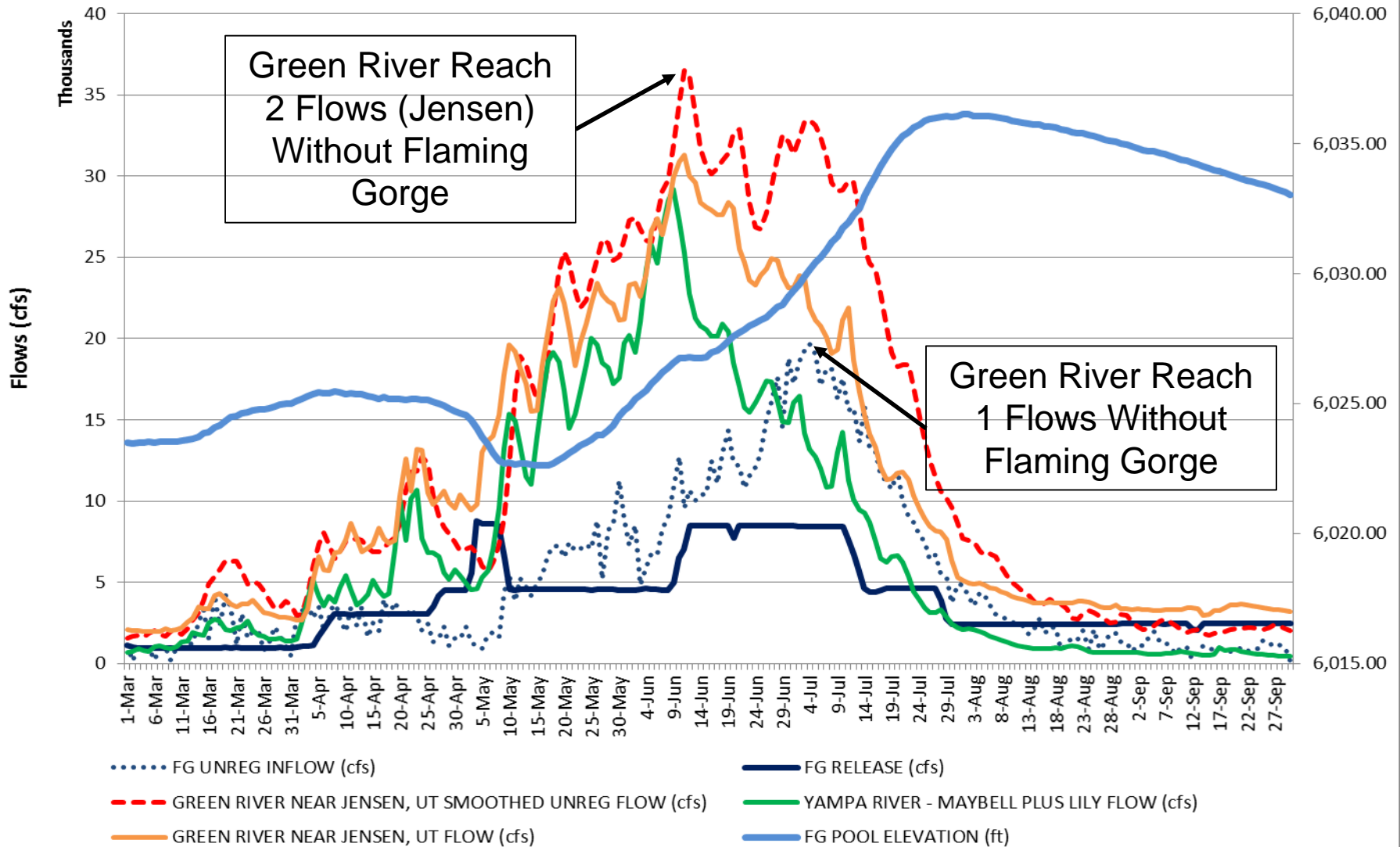
Yampa River Basin - Maybell Plus Lily

Historic April-July Unregulated Inflow Volume Ranking (1922-2015)



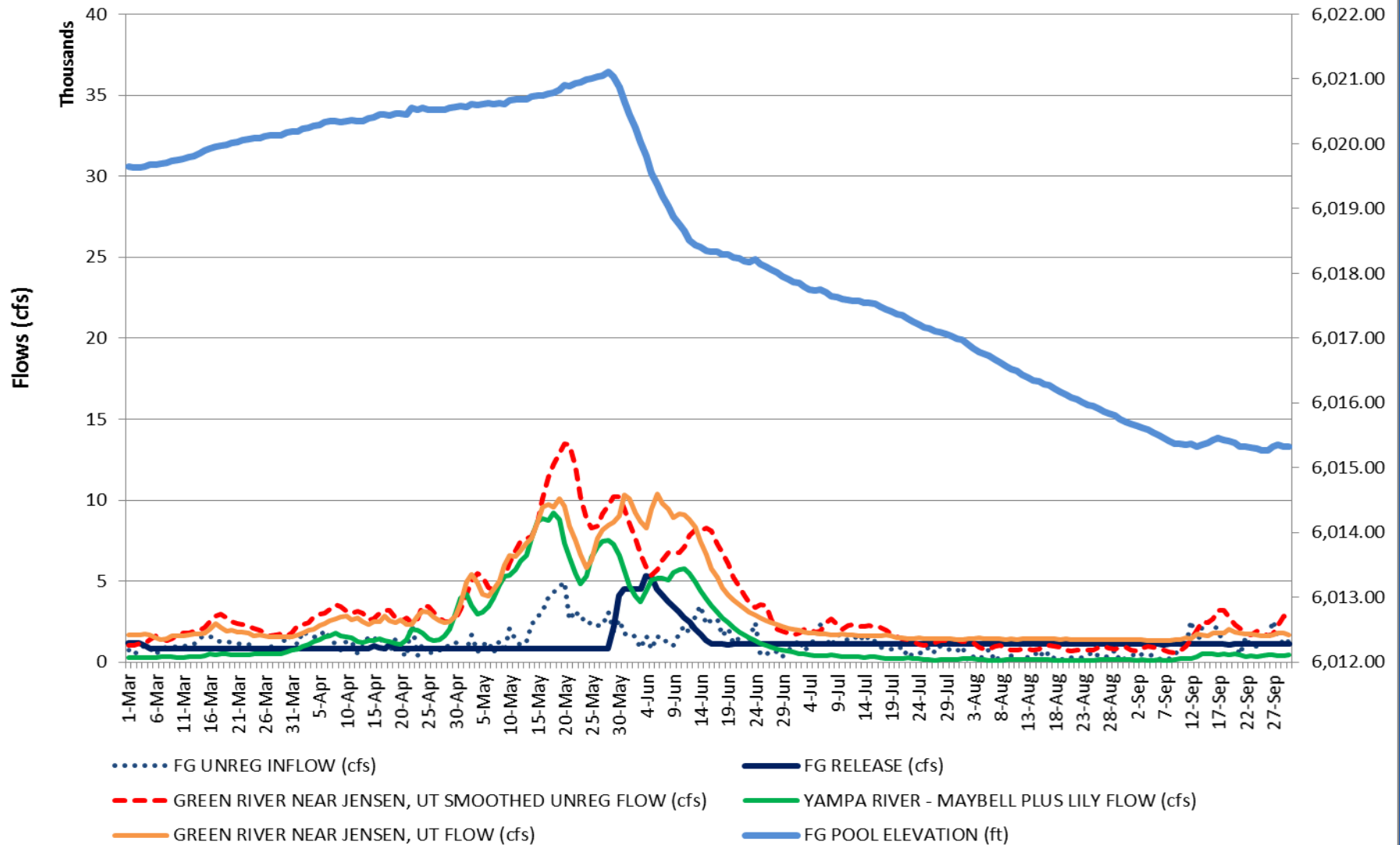
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Flaming Gorge Releases and Green and Yampa River Flows 2011



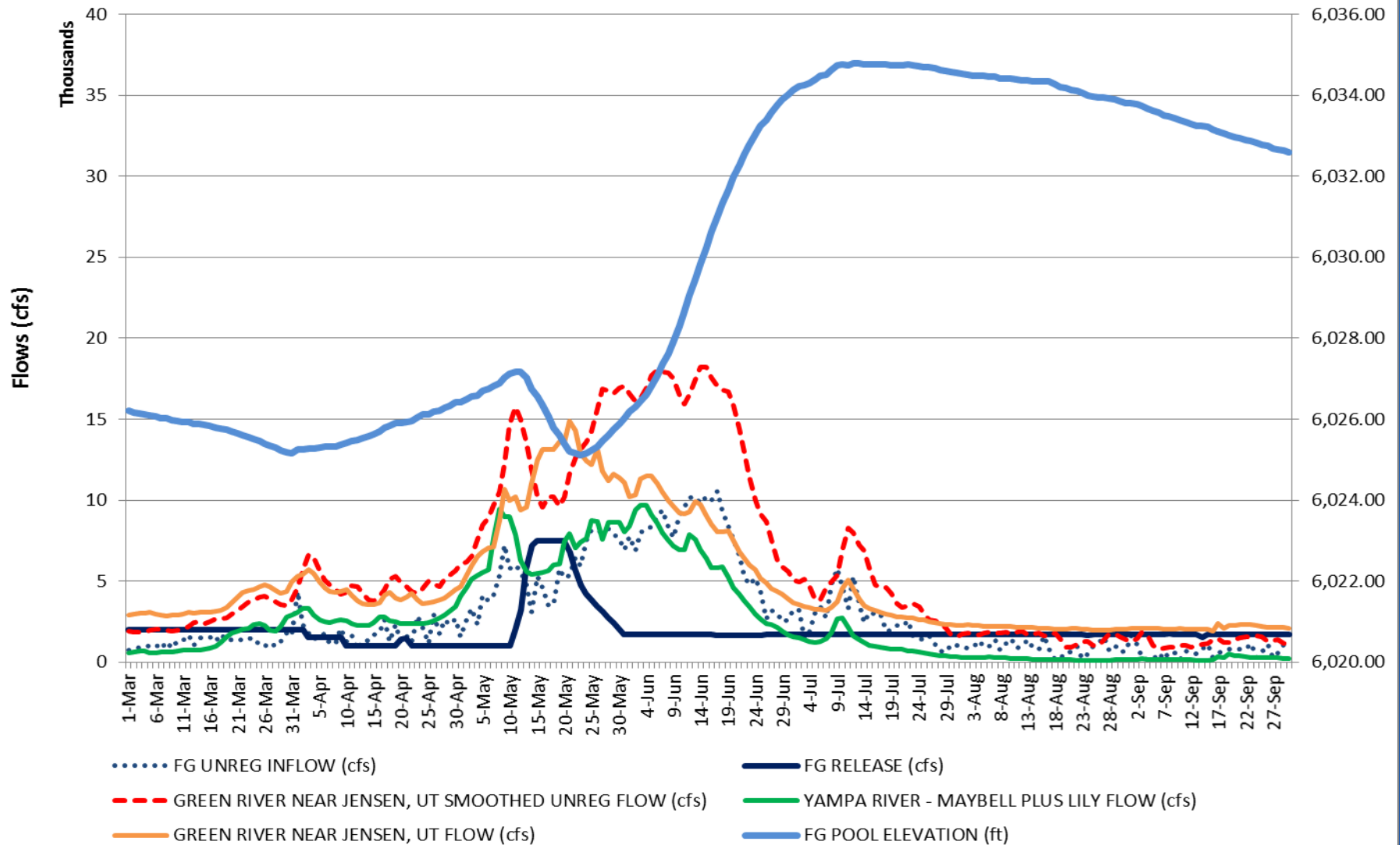
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Flaming Gorge Releases and Green and Yampa River Flows 2013



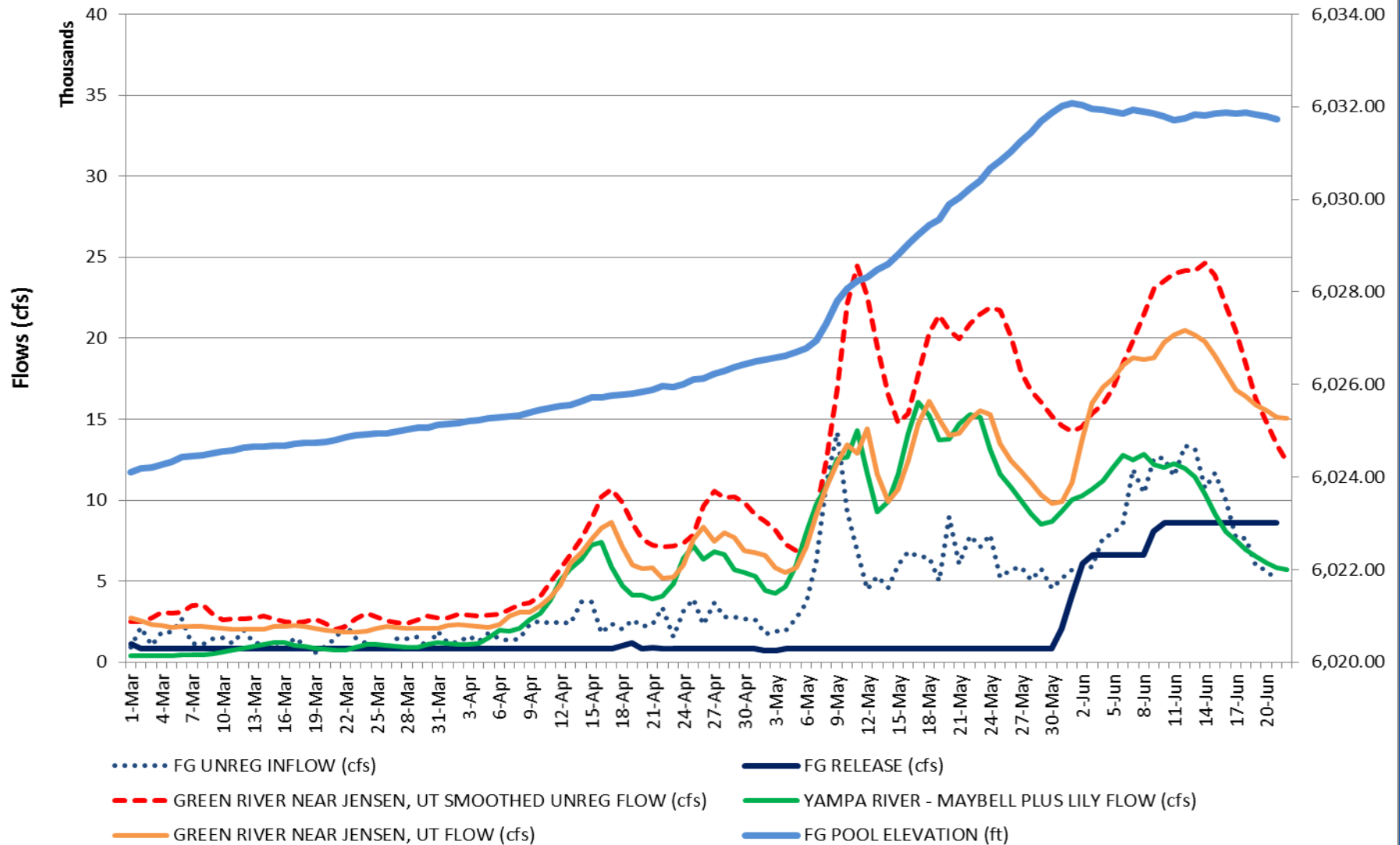
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Flaming Gorge Releases and Green and Yampa River Flows 2015



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Flaming Gorge Releases and Green and Yampa River Flows 2016



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Larval Trigger Study Plan

TABLE 2. Matrix to Be Used in Studying the Effectiveness of a Larval Trigger

Peak Flow (x) as Measured at Jensen, Utah	Proposed Study Wetlands ^(a, b)	Number of Days (x) Flow to Be Exceeded and Corresponding Hydrologic Conditions ^(c)		
		$1 \leq x < 7$	$7 \leq x < 14$	$x \geq 14$
$8,300 \leq x < 14,000$ cfs	Stewart Lake (f), Above Brennan (f), Old Charley Wash (s)	Dry	Moderately dry	Moderately dry and average (below median)
$14,000 \leq x < 18,600$ cfs	Same as previous plus Thunder Ranch (f), Bonanza Bridge (f), Johnson Bottom (s), Stirrup (s), Leota 7 (s)	Average (below median)	Average (below median)	Average (below median)
$18,600 \leq x < 20,300$ cfs	Same as previous	Average (above median)	Average (above median)	Average (above median)
$20,300 \leq x < 26,400$ cfs	Same as previous plus Baeser Bend (s), Wyasket (s), additional Leota units (7a and 4), Sheppard Bottom (s)	Moderately wet	Moderately wet	Moderately wet
$x \geq 26,400$ cfs	Same as previous	Wet	Wet	Wet

(a) f = flow-through wetland, s = single-breach wetland

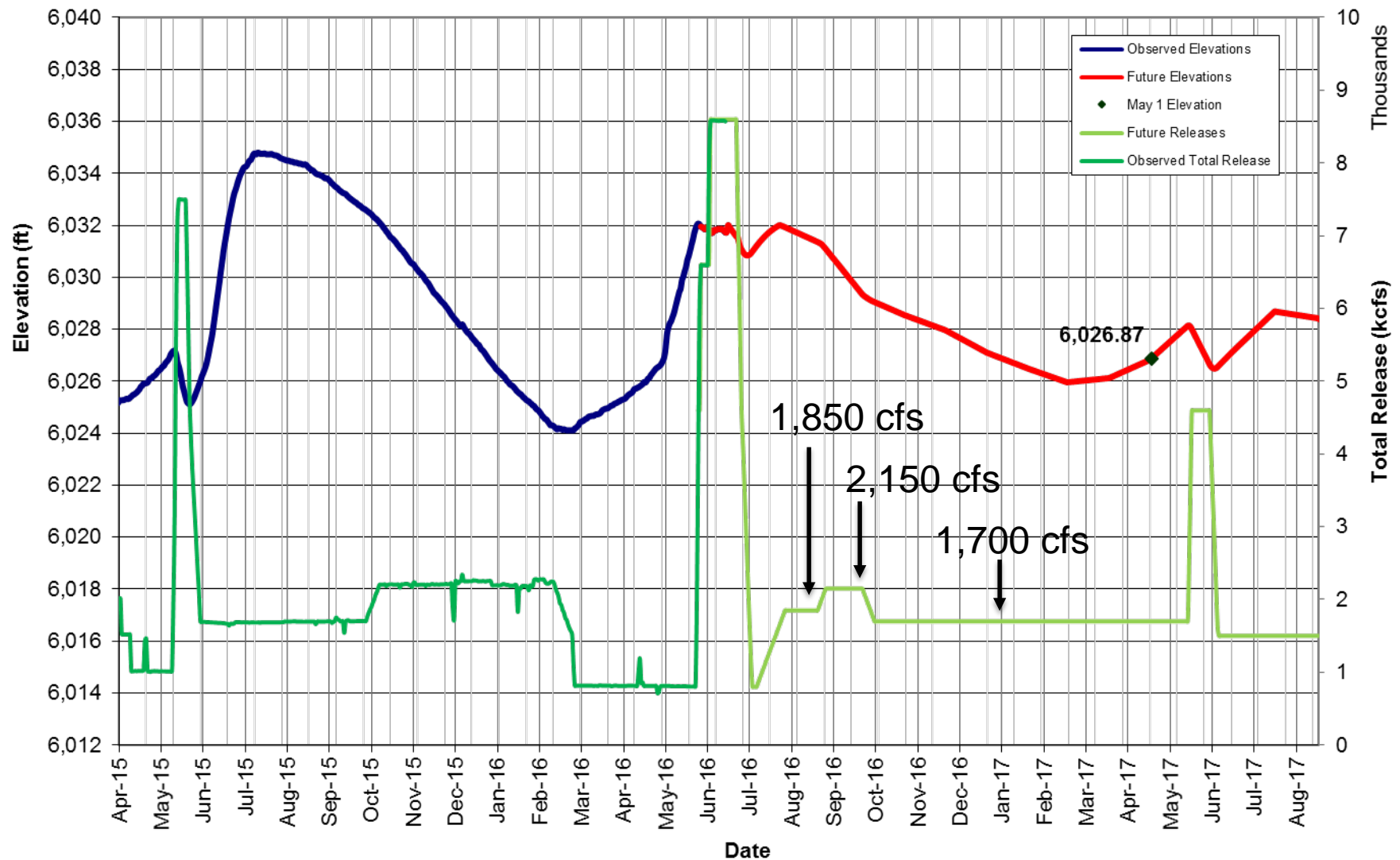
(b) Up to eight wetlands would be sampled in a given year with the three in the lowest flow category being sampled in all years.

(c) Refer to Table 1 for exceedance percentages and peak flow recommendations for each hydrologic condition. Note that the hydrologic conditions presented are the driest that could support a particular combination of peak flow magnitude and duration. For any combination, wetter hydrology could also support an experiment.

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Flaming Gorge Operations WY2016-2017

Most Probable Modeled Operations - June Midmonth Forecast



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Flaming Gorge Working Group

June 2016

- Questions?
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- (801) 524-3883

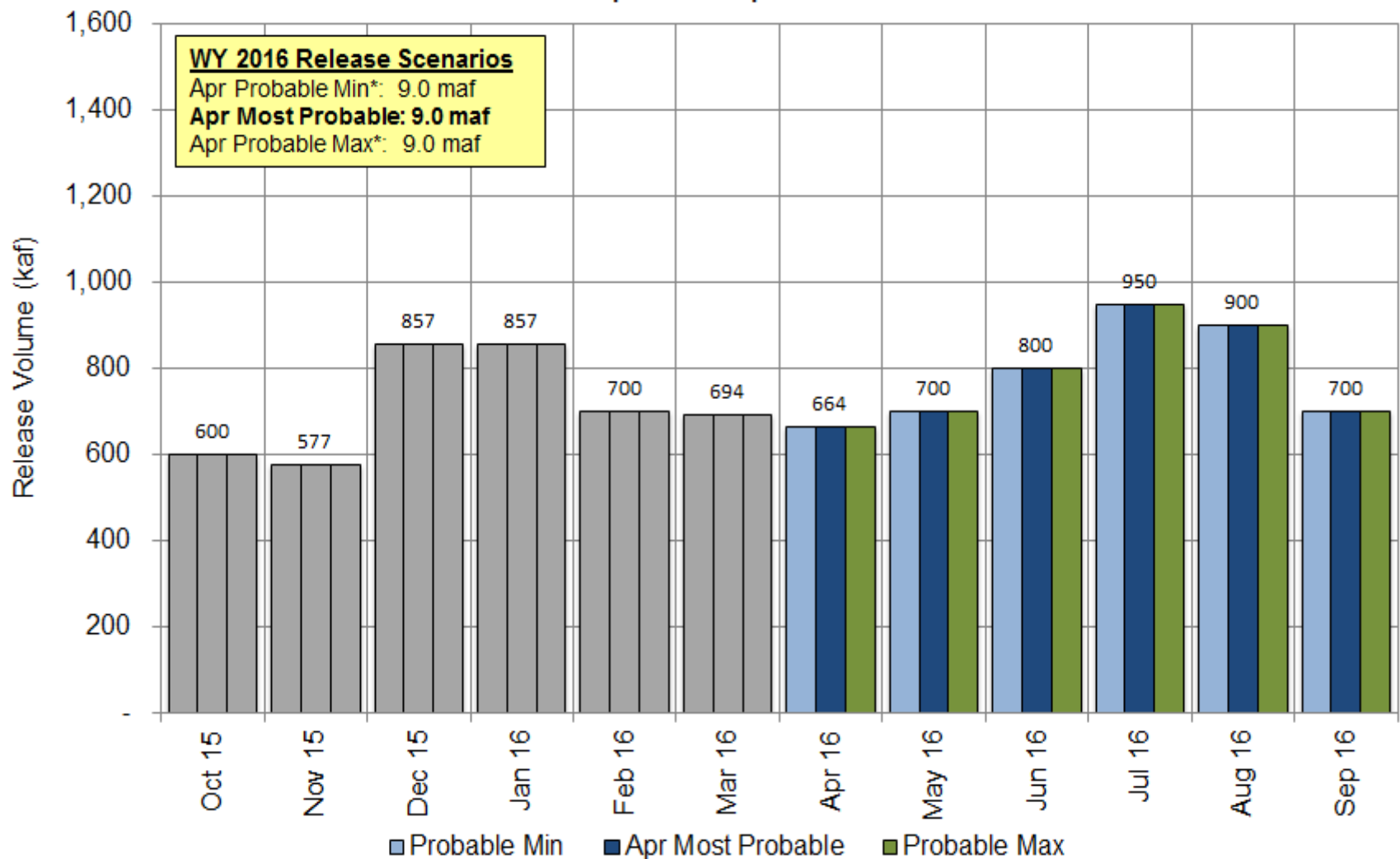


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Projected Lake Powell Monthly Release Volume Distribution

Release Scenarios for Water Year 2016

Updated April 2016



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Lake Powell End of Month Elevations

Historic and Projected based on April 2016 Modeling

